

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel Claim 9 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claim 10 to read as follows. Note that all the claims currently pending in this application, including those not presently being amended, have been reproduced below.

1. (Previously amended) A process for forming images comprising the steps of:

conducting recording on a recording medium provided with an image-receiving layer, the image-receiving layer containing particles having a diameter of 0.1 to 10 μm for imparting a matted appearance to the surface of the image-receiving layer;

laminating a laminating film comprising a thermoplastic film without a backing layer onto the image-receiving layer; and

plasticizing and smoothing the surface of the thermoplastic film that is opposite to the surface in contact with the image-receiving layer with heating and pressurizing means to bond a back side of the thermoplastic film onto the image-receiving layer.

2. (Previously amended) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1, wherein a surface glossiness of the heating and pressurizing means is equal to or greater than 10% at an incident angle of 20°.

3. (Previously amended) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 2, wherein the surface glossiness is equal to or greater than 70% at an incident angle of 75°.

4. (Previously amended) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1, wherein either a glass transition point of the thermoplastic film is lower than a glass transition point of a binder resin in the image-receiving layer or a film-forming temperature of the thermoplastic film is lower than a film-forming temperature of a binder resin in the image-receiving layer.

5. (Previously amended) A process for forming images as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the thermoplastic film is a laminate of two or more thermoplastic polymer layers.

6. (Previously amended) An apparatus for forming images comprising:
an ink-jet head for recording on a recording medium;

a laminate section for laminating a laminating film comprised of a thermoplastic film without a backing layer onto the recording medium on which recording has been conducted; and

heating and pressurizing means for plasticizing and smoothing the thermoplastic film by heating and pressurizing and bonding a back side of the thermoplastic film onto an image-receiving layer of the recording medium,

wherein the surface roughness (Ra) of the surface of said heating and pressurizing means that comes into contact with the thermoplastic film is $3\mu\text{m}$ or less.

7. (Previously added) The apparatus as set forth in claim 6, wherein the surface, which comes into contact with the thermoplastic film, of said heating and pressurizing means is of a rubber material.

8. (Previously added) The apparatus as set forth in claim 6, wherein the surface, which comes into contact with the thermoplastic film, of said heating and pressurizing means is of a silicon rubber.

Claim 9 (cancelled).

10. (Currently amended) A process for forming images comprising the steps of:

conducting recording on a recording medium provided with an image-receiving layer;

laminating a laminating film comprising a thermoplastic film onto the image-receiving layer; and

plasticizing and smoothing the surface of the laminating film that is opposite to the surface which ~~comes into~~ is in contact with the image-receiving layer with heating and pressurizing means to bond a back side of the thermoplastic film onto the image-receiving layer.